

GOOD MORNING EVERYONE!

IT'S A TRUE PLEASURE TO JOIN YOU THIS MORNING AS WE DEDICATE THE WEST BRIDGE AND BEAR CUT BRIDGE.

WE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY ARE BLESSED TO LIVE IN A COMMUNITY THAT HAS SO MUCH NATURAL AND SCENIC BEAUTY THAT WE CAN ALL ENJOY ON A YEAR-ROUND BASIS.

THE RIDE ALONG THE RICKENBACKER CAUSEWAY... THROUGH VIRGINIA KEY, AND THEN INTO THE ISLAND PARADISE OF KEY BISCAYNE...

GOING THROUGH CRANDON PARK, THE VILLAGE, AND ENDING AT BILL BAGGS CAPE FLORIDA STATE PARK, IS PERHAPS ONE OF THE MOST SCENIC IN ALL SOUTH FLORIDA.

EVERY SINGLE DAY, COUNTLESS VISITORS AND RESIDENTS ENJOY THIS RIDE, WHETHER IN A CAR, ON A BICYCLE OR ON FOOT.

OUR VISITORS AND RESIDENTS NOW HAVE THIS IMPROVED BRIDGE THAT CONNECTS VIRGINIA KEY TO KEY BISCAYNE...

AND IT OFFERS BETTER TRAFFIC FLOW, AND MAJOR ENHANCEMENTS FOR PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLISTS.

WE ALL KNOW THAT THE STORY OF THE REHABILITATION OF THIS BRIDGE GOES BACK TO 2012 WHEN AN FDOT INSPECTION REVEALED PROBLEMS UNDERNEATH THESE BRIDGES - THE BEAR CUT AND WEST BRIDGES.

THE COUNTY ACTED QUICKLY AND I DIRECTED THAT THIS PROJECT BE EXPEDITED.

WORK ON THIS BRIDGE BEGAN LAST SUMMER...

AND TODAY, A YEAR AND \$35 MILLION LATER, WE HAVE THESE TWO IMPROVED BRIDGES WITH AMENITIES THAT WE CAN ALL BE VERY PROUD OF.

WE ALSO TOOK THIS OPPORTUNITY TO INSTALL A NEW WATER-PIPE THAT ENHANCES CAPACITY AND BETTER SERVES THE RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES ON THE VILLAGE OF KEY BISCAYNE.

AND, TOGETHER WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUN PASS AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE CAUSEWAY...

THIS NEW BRIDGE WILL GO A LONG WAY TOWARD ALLEVIATING AND IMPROVING THE FLOW OF TRAFFIC...

ESPECIALLY DURING THE MIAMI OPEN TENNIS TOURNAMENT AND THE MANY SPECIAL EVENTS HOSTED ON THIS BEAUTIFUL ISLAND.

THE SAFETY OF ALL USERS OF THE CAUSEWAY AND SURROUNDING AREAS IS A TOP PRIORITY FOR MY ADMINISTRATION.

I HAVE BEEN AN AVID CYCLIST FOR YEARS, AND I UNDERSTAND THE ECONOMIC AND HEALTH BENEFITS CYCLING PROVIDES TO A COMMUNITY.

OVER THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS, THE COUNTY HAS TAKEN PROACTIVE STEPS TO IMPROVE CYCLIST AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ALONG THE CAUSEWAY AS EVIDENCED BY A NUMBER OF PROJECTS AND AN INVESTMENT OF APPROXIMATELY \$5.3 MILLION.

THEY INCLUDE RESURFACING AND PAVEMENT MARKINGS, ELECTRONIC SPEED FEEDBACK SIGNS...

SPEED LIMIT SIGNAGE, REPLACEMENT OF BRIDGE JOINTS, INSTALLATIONS OF HAND-RAILS,

SHOULDER WIDENING, AND AUDIBLE VIBRATORY MARKINGS.

MORE RECENTLY, THE COUNTY'S COMMITMENT TO CYCLIST AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IS CLEARLY EVIDENCED BY THE INCLUSION OF TWO 14-FOOT WIDE BICYCLE / PEDESTRIAN PROTECTED PATHS, AT A COST OF APPROXIMATELY \$8.5 MILLION, AS PART OF THIS PROJECT.

MOVING FORWARD, CONTINUITY AND SAFETY WILL BE IMPROVED BY A RESURFACING PROJECT THAT WILL WIDEN THE EXISTING BICYCLE LANES ALONG CRANDON BOULEVARD FROM THE BEAR CUT BRIDGE TO THE ENTRANCE OF KEY BISCAYNE.

THESE INVESTMENTS ARE PART OF OUR CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS AS WE ALL SHARE THE ROAD.

THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE TODAY WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COMPLETION OF THIS BRIDGE, AND THEY DESERVE OUR HEARTFELT THANKS.

A BIG THANK YOU TO MAYOR CAPLAN, MAYOR-ELECT MAYRA PEÑA-LINDSAY AND THE VILLAGE OF KEY BISCAYNE.

ALTHOUGH WE DIDN'T ALWAYS AGREE WITH THE METHODOLOGY, WE WORKED TOGETHER THROUGH OUR DIFFERENCES AND WERE ABLE TO PRIORITIZE THE IMMEDIATE NEEDS.

I HAVE COMMITTED TO THEM THAT WE WILL IDENTIFY FUNDING IN THE FUTURE TO BEGIN THE NECESSARY PLANNING PROCESSES REQUIRED TO PROACTIVELY REVIEW FUTURE NEEDS ALONG THIS CAUSEWAY.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS AT THE CITY OF MIAMI...

TOGETHER WE PROVIDED SUPPORT FOR THE NEEDS OF THE PROJECTS AND DEALT WITH RESIDENT ISSUES ON THE WEST END BRIDGE COMPONENT.

THANK YOU TO OUR CONTRACTOR KIEWIT - WHICH HAS BEEN VERY COOPERATIVE AND RESPONSIVE THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE PROCESS.

AND TO OUR COUNTY FAMILY, THE PUBLIC WORKS AND WASTE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT AND ALL OF THE SUPPORTING COUNTY DEPARTMENTS.

THANK YOU TO ALL OF THE PROFESSIONALS WHO HAVE WORKED ON THIS PROJECT.

ALINA AND KATHY, THANK YOU BOTH FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP...

TONY, MARCO AND THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM, THIS IS YOUR DAY.

THANK YOU ALL AND LET ENJOY THIS BEAUTIFUL MORNING HERE ON BEAR CUT BRIDGE.

